

# **Request for Proposal:**

## **Comprehensive Water & Sewer Infrastructure Master Plan**

The Laurens County Water & Sewer Commission (LCWSC) is soliciting request for proposal for professional engineering services to prepare a comprehensive water and sewer infrastructure master plan to be funded by the South Carolina Rural Infrastructure Authority and LCWSC. Consultants who submit proposals should be licensed as a Professional Engineer in the State of South Carolina and be experienced in the field of water distribution, sewer collection, and water and sewer treatment, be capable of performing system condition assessments, be capable of effectively operating a WaterGEMS hydraulic model, and be knowledgeable about planning for future upgrades and expansion for this type of infrastructure.

The project goal is to develop a comprehensive water and sewer infrastructure master plan that enables the LCWSC to strategically plan and budget for the implementation of water and sewer system improvements. This will allow the LCWSC to maintain a high level of reliability as well as efficiency for current demand, future growth, future regulations, and emergency situations.

The LCWSC is in a prime location for both residential, commercial, and industrial development and growth. To be prepared for this potential growth and have sustainable utility infrastructure and resources for decades to come, the LCWSC has determined that it is necessary to develop a master plan to guide future utility and economic development decisions.

The LCWSC will not be responsible for any costs incurred by any firm to respond to this request. Firms who wish to submit proposals must provide the information outlined in the RFP by February 29, 2024. Five copies of the response must be provided in a sealed envelope clearly marked "Response to RFP for the Water and Sewer Master Plan" by 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 29, 2024. Electronic (email) or facsimile submissions will not be accepted, and late submittals will be rejected. Proposals should be submitted to:

Jeff Field  
Executive Director  
LCWSC  
3850 Highway 221  
Laurens, SC 29360

The tentative timeline is:

RFP release January 24, 2024

Deadline for Submission of Questions – February 14, 2024

RFP due February 29, 2024

Selection by LCWSC March 15, 2024

Complete Water and Sewer Master Plan by February 28, 2025.

The LCWSC may conduct inquiries and request additional information from firms as the LCWSC deems necessary to assist in its evaluation.

The LCWSC reserves the right to accept or reject any and all proposals submitted and/or negotiate terms with firms who submit proposals. The LCWSC reserves the right to select the firm that best meets the needs of the LCWSC in the sole judgement of the LCWSC, based on the evaluation criteria included below.

All questions must be in writing and directed to:

K.C. Price, P.E.  
LCWSC  
3850 Highway 221  
Laurens, SC 29360

Or via email to [jfield@LCWSC.com](mailto:jfield@LCWSC.com) AND [kprice@LCWSC.com](mailto:kprice@LCWSC.com).

All questions about the meaning or intent of this RFP request are to be submitted to the above in writing. Interpretations or clarifications considered necessary by LCWSC in response to such questions will be issued by Addenda delivered to all parties requesting inclusion in writing as potential submitters to this RFP. This list will be maintained by LCWSC and will be available for review upon request.

Questions received after question submittal deadline listed above will go unanswered.

Only questions answered by Addenda will be binding. Oral and other interpretations or clarifications will be without legal effect. Addenda may be issued to clarify, correct, supplement, or change the Bidding Documents.

## LCWSC Facilities

### *Water*

The components of the water system include the following:

- 12 Elevated Tanks
- 7 Pump Stations
- 1035 Fire Hydrants
- 298 Post Hydrants
- 4788 System Valves
- 593 Blow Offs
- 29 Auto Flushers
- 18 PRV/Control Valves
- 4 MGD SuperPulsator with Greenleaf filters, Surface Water Treatment Facility
- 9 MGD Raw Water Intake/Pump Station

## *Sewer*

The components of the sewer system include the following:

- 2.75 MGD Wastewater Treatment Plant
- 21 Lift Stations
- 1397 Manholes
- 33.7 Miles of sewer force main
- 63 Miles of Gravity sewer lines
- 67 Air Release Valves

## **About LCWSC**

### *Summary of Organization and System*

The LCWSC has a fundamental mission: providing safe, high-quality drinking water and efficient wastewater services. Established in 1993 by consolidating the Rabon Creek Rural Water District and the Water Resources Commission, LCWSC serves various parts of Laurens County and a small portion of Greenville.

The Commission prioritizes professionalism and customer service, evident in employee attire and courteous interactions with customers. Over the years, LCWSC's customer base has grown significantly, from 1,300 customers in 1972 to currently serving about 16,700, mostly residential users.

Impressively, LCWSC has expanded its infrastructure, boasting 900 miles of water lines, 16,700 service connections, pump stations, and multiple elevated tanks. Expansion efforts since 2015 have added approximately five miles of new water mains, enhancing capacity and supporting residential development.

Strategic infrastructure construction, such as a 1,000,000-gallon elevated tank and sewer systems, was designed to accommodate both large and small manufacturing facilities. This foresight led to the establishment of major manufacturing hubs like the ZF Transmissions facility and the Inteplast Group, generating substantial employment and contributing to the global supply chain.

Ongoing developments, such as the Connexial Center and expansions by companies like Fibertex Nonwovens, have increased employment opportunities. These developments have also attracted grants and investments to expand sewer systems, further supporting industrial growth.

Given the Commission's proactive stance in encouraging economic development and its strategic location near vital transportation links like Interstate I-385, Laurens County is becoming an attractive hub for industrial, commercial, and residential growth. These factors are driving the need for effective planning and goal setting.

Anticipating substantial population and economic expansion over the next couple of decades, LCWSC's financial outlook remains robust. The Commission's active role in fostering economic expansion aligns with opportunities in both northern and southern Laurens County, including the development of Lake Greenwood.

In summary, the Laurens County Water & Sewer Commission is dedicated to facilitating growth, ensuring sustainable water resources, and supporting economic prosperity. Its commitment to service, strategic infrastructure development, and active involvement in fostering economic expansion make it a pivotal player in driving Laurens County's future development and prosperity.

## Scope

The LCWSC understands this RFP may not fully describe the work envisioned. The information contained in this RFP is the LCWSC's best understanding of the current needs and how to address them, but the LCWSC will be relying on the selected firm to suggest modification to the scope of work described herein based on their professional expertise in the subject area and an initial meeting with the stakeholders.

- Anticipated components of the master plan may include the following items:
- Summary and description of the LCWSC's water/sewer systems as well as projection of water and sewer needs for the next 10 year and 20 year future planning period.
- Review of the LCWSC's existing water distribution system/hydraulic model and identification of hydraulic deficiencies with recommendations based upon master plan projected growth.
- Review of the LCWSC's existing Water Treatment Plant and identification of hydraulic deficiencies, treatment deficiencies, capacity issues, and provide recommendations based upon master plan projected growth and age of current assets.
- Review existing capital projects and determine a priority ranking system with cost estimates.
- Cost estimates for recommended improvements to the distribution and water treatment systems to ensure adequate capacity for future demand and compliance with future EPA/SCDHEC regulations.
- Provide potential sources of funding including potential grant opportunities based on benefits of project. Funding strategies should be considered to minimize rate increases.
- Review existing capital projects and determine a priority ranking system with cost estimates.
- A short and long-term capital improvement plan (CIP) to address identified deficiencies, including prioritization, alternatives, analysis, and schedules.
- Identification of any present and future regulatory concerns for the system.
- Present draft report for review and comment to LCWSC Administrator and LCWSC Board
- Prepare documentation necessary to be compliant with terms of RIA Grant
- Furnish the LCWSC with an electronic source file of the final master plan and deliver ten (10) printed and bound copies.
- Provide marketing material to highlight the Plan and certain high-profile projects. Material will be used on LCWSC social media accounts.
- Present final report to LCWSC Board.

## Engineers Required Qualifications

The consultant must possess and demonstrate, as a minimum, the following qualifications:

- A minimum of 10 years previous experience in conducting reviews of existing water and wastewater infrastructure.
- Minimum of 10 years' experience of the Senior Project management team and key staff proposed.

- A South Carolina licensed engineer with demonstrated expertise in the technical areas of public water and sewer systems, to include treatment, distribution and collection.
- The ability to meet timelines and demands as may arise during the entirety of the project and must be flexible and able to adjust to changing priorities or direction.
- Ability to perform hydraulic modeling.
- The ability to work within a budget with an avoidance of change orders
- Resources to develop realistic construction cost estimates.

## Proposal Format

**Coversheet / Cover Letter:** This should include the highlights of the proposal, such as an overview of the firm's organization, most relevant experience, specific staff specialty and facilities involved in servicing the LCWSC, and the name, mailing address, telephone number, and e-mail address of a contact person for questions concerning the proposal submitted (preferably who will be in responsible charge of the project).

**Qualifications & Experience of the Firm:** Brief history and organization of the firm, legal entity that will enter into the contract, location of the office where the work will be performed, and the name and title of the person that is authorized to enter into a work agreement. List any sub-consultant firms that will support your firm.

Provide a narrative of your firm's prior experience and qualifications as it pertains to the above scope of work and provide a list of projects with similar scopes.

The selected firm must provide proof of professional authorization in the State of South Carolina (Certificate of Authorization) prior to the execution of the agreement.

**Project Team:** Provide a list of the project team members (including the office location where they currently work) that you propose to use and identify the responsibility of each team member. You do not need to list all of your subconsultant employees that may be on the team, but you should list your subconsultants and the primary contact at your subconsultants. Provide a brief resume for each person listing specific similar project experience, educational experience, and licensure/certifications. List their specialty or role on the team.

**Project Management Approach to the Project & Quality Control:** This should include a proposed project schedule (project milestones including but not limited to the initial meeting/conference to kick off the project implementation, periodic progress meeting, and project completion), and detailed approach to complete this project, familiarity with this project, identification of unique issues related to the project, potential grants or financial assistance options, and the process proposed for communications with LCWSC stakeholders. Briefly describe anticipated roles and responsibilities of the LCWSC and the firm.

**Response Capability:** Provide a statement of your firm's current workload, and ability to meet the project schedules.

**Budget and Unit Cost:** Please provide the total proposed budget along with pertinent unit costs including hourly rates for various positions for members (by position, not individual) of the Project Team.

**References:** Must provide a list of projects or clients served within the last ten (10) years that demonstrate the applicants' skill and capabilities with the type of service being requested. Please include the project name, date, location, description, budget, current client contact name and telephone number. The firm's role in the project should also be described (planning, preliminary design, construction management, prime consultant, subconsultant, etc.). For each project, indicate which proposed team member worked on the project and describe the role/work they performed and their levels of involvement. By submission of the references, you are authorizing the LCWSC to contact these references.

**Length:** Total length of RFP submission should not exceed 25 pages.

## Evaluation Criteria

The following factors will be used in evaluating the proposals and ranking firms:

- Understanding of the project and ability to deliver on time and budget (30%).
- Ability to meet requirements (20%).
- Expertise in similar projects (20%).
- Proposed approach and innovation (15%).
- Cost (10%).
- Other relevant factors (5%) such as responses to inquiries with references or others in the industry that may have experience with submitting firm.

Qualifications will be ranked and graded. LCWSC reserves the right to reject any or all Qualifications, to waive any and all technicalities, and to select the firm who is determined to best meet the needs of LCWSC for this project based on the criteria listed above.

## RFP Revisions

If a proposing firm finds discrepancies in or omissions from the specifications or should require additional clarification of any part, a written or email request for interpretations shall be submitted to K.C. Price, LCWSC. Any interpretation of or changes made to the RFP will be made by written addendum to each proposing firm that requests addition to the list as a prospective submitter. The LCWSC will not be responsible for the accuracy of any other oral explanations, interpretations, or representations. It shall be the responsibility of each proposing organization or individual to verify that every addendum has been received prior to submitting proposals.

## Vendor Certification

The submission of proposal shall be deemed a representation and certification that the proposing vendor:

- Has carefully read and fully understands the information provided by the LCWSC in this RFP;
- Is financially solvent and has the capability to successfully undertake and complete the responsibilities and obligations of the proposal submitted;
- Represents that all of the information contained in the submitted proposal is true and correct;
- Acknowledges that the LCWSC has the right to make any inquiry it deems appropriate to substantiate or supplement information provided by proposing vendors and hereby grants the LCWSC permission to make these inquiries.

## LCWSC Conditions

No proposals will be accepted from any person or organization that is in arrears for any obligation to the LCWSC, or that otherwise may be deemed irresponsible or unresponsive by LCWSC staff.

The LCWSC is not obligated to enter into any contract as a result of the RFP.

The LCWSC reserves the right to reject any and all proposals or any part thereof and to select the most responsive proposal that is deemed in the best interest of the LCWSC based on the evaluation criteria listed above.

The LCWSC reserves the right to negotiate with any, none, or all of the proposing vendors. LCWSC must first negotiate with the highest ranked respondent. If those negotiations fail, it may move down the list and negotiate with the next firm and may not re-initiate negotiations with the first firm. At no point should negotiations be occurring with multiple firms.

All costs, including travel and expenses, incurred in the preparation of this proposal will be borne solely by the proposing company.

The LCWSC will not return proposal materials to those submitting proposals.

No agreements with any selected firm shall be binding until a contract is approved and signed and executed by the LCWSC and authorized representatives of the firm. Per SC Rural Infrastructure (RIA) guidelines, any contract negotiated as a result of this procurement process will require approval from RIA prior to award/execution.

The LCWSC requires the selected firm and any subcontractors to provide proof of insurance to include professional liability, workers compensation, employer's liability, error and omissions, general liability, and auto liability prior to commencing work.

The LCWSC is an Equal Opportunity employer. The LCWSC reserves the right to disqualify from consideration statements received after the date and time specified above. Any proposals may be withdrawn or modified by written request prior to the date and time of receipt provided above. In submitting these qualifications, it is understood by respondent that the LCWSC reserves the right to 1) reject any and all proposals and to be the sole judge of the value and merit of the statements offered;

and 2) eliminate from consideration any statement deemed substantially or materially unresponsive to the requests provided herein. Any protest will be handled under the LCWSC Procurement Policy (effective 3/24/2015) in the attached Section IV. Resolving Protests (pg. 14 & 15).





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c. Nothing in subsections a. or b. above shall be construed to limit the authority of the Commission to require a payment or performance bond, or other security, in addition to the bonds specified above.

3. Waiver of Bonding Requirements. Bonding requirements may be waived at the discretion of the Director.

D. Certificates of Insurance.

1. All contractors, subcontractors designated by the Director, and others deemed necessary by the Director shall obtain a Certificate of Insurance for workers compensation and general liability listing the Commission as additionally insured, noting the effective date of the policy, and setting forth the applicable limits for the policy. Such policy or policies of insurance shall be in force, at a minimum, for the duration of the contract or project.

IV. Resolving Protests

A. Right to Protest. Any actual or prospective bidder, proposer or contractor actual or prospective ("Interested Party"), who is aggrieved in connection with the solicitation or award of a contract, may protest to the Director. The protest, setting forth the grievance and the grounds therefor, shall be submitted in writing within ten days after such Interested Party knows or should have known of the facts giving rise thereto, but in no circumstance after fifteen days of notification of award of contract.



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- B. Authority to Resolve Protests. The Director shall have the authority to settle and resolve a protest of an Interested Party concerning the solicitation or award of a contract.
- C. Decision. If the protest is not resolved by mutual agreement within ten calendar days of receipt of the notice of protest, the Director shall promptly, and no later than the fifteenth calendar day following receipt of the notice of protest, issue a decision in writing, stating the reasons for the action taken. A decision of the Director shall be final and conclusive, unless within ten calendar days of receipt of the decision, an Interested Party submits an appeal to the Board of the Commission's Chairman, setting forth the grounds for the appeal. A copy of the appeal shall also be furnished immediately to all other Interested Parties. Within thirty days of receiving the appeal, the Board of the Commission shall hold a hearing and hear arguments from all Interested Parties pursuant to procedures that the Board of the Commission decides are appropriate. Within ten days of the hearing, the Board of the Commission will issue its decision to all Interested Parties, which decision shall be final and conclusive.